

REMARKS

The Final Office Action of July 31, 2003 is acknowledged. In response thereto, The Applicants have attached the Request for Continued Examination (RCE), and requests entry of the above Amendment.

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by both U.S. Patent No. 5,634,683 to *Young* and U.S. Patent No. 5,248,180 to *Hussaini*.

The Examiner asserts that *Young* discloses a recreational vehicle 10 having a main room, and an expandable room moveable relative to the main room to provide additional living space. The vehicle 10 includes a drive mechanism for moving the expandable room between retracted and expanded positions. Sealing members are positioned between the main room and the expandable room. A mechanism is mounted adjacent the top edge of the expandable room for moving the relative position of the sealing member and the sealing surface to enhance the sealing between the expandable room and the main room.

The Examiner also asserts that *Hussaini* discloses a recreational vehicle 10 having a main room and an expandable room moveable relative to the main room to provide additional living space to the main room. The Examiner also believes *Hussaini* includes a drive mechanism for moving the expandable room between an extended position and a retracted position, and a sealing member positioned between the main room and the expandable room. A mechanism is mounted adjacent the top edge of the expandable room for moving the relative position of the sealing member and the sealing surface of the recreational vehicle to enhance sealing between the expandable room and the main room.

The Applicants have amended claim 1 in order to clarify that the mechanism which alters the relative position of the sealing member and the sealing surface is a latching mechanism including a latch joined to an actuator. In both *Young* and *Hussaini* the mechanism that controls the relative position of the sealing surface and the sealing member is a drive mechanism. For example, in *Hussaini* the upper rack mounted to the upper surface of the expandable room engages a gear that drives the rack. Similarly, *Young* includes a mechanism including a drive screw connected to the upper edge of the expandable room. The drive screw is connected to a motor via a chain. Neither *Hussaini*

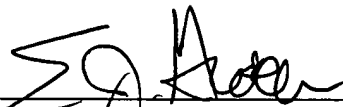
nor *Young* disclose a latching mechanism including a latch and an actuator, as is now claimed in claim 1, which moves the relative position of the sealing member and the sealing surface while also latching the expandable room to the main room.

The Applicants have also added independent claims 27, 46 and 54. Claim 27 is directed at a latching mechanism including a latch configured to engage a bracket and including a means drawing the expandable room toward the vehicle to increase the effectiveness of the seal there between. Claim 46 is also directed to a latching mechanism. As discussed above, neither *Young* nor *Hussaini* disclose latches. Thus, these claims are allowable over the above cited references. In addition, claim 54 claims a recreational vehicle including a latching mechanism that retains the expandable room in the retracted position while also withdrawing a portion of the expandable room as the expandable room is moved in the direction of the side wall.

Each of the independent claims of the present application claims, in part, a latching mechanism that latches the expandable room and main room and withdraws a portion of the expandable room into the retracted position. This feature is not shown by *Hussaini* and *Young*, since both of these references includes drive mechanisms located along the top edge of the expandable room rather than a latching mechanism. Thus, the applicants believe the independent claims of the present application, and all claims depending therefrom, are allowable over the cited references. Accordingly, the applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request passage thereof.

With the above Amendment and Remarks of record, Applicants consider all pending claims 1-54 to be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests such from the Examiner. Applicants believe the appropriate fee for this RCE are enclosed; however should an additional extension fee be required, please consider this a request for such and charge Baker & Daniels Deposit Account No. 02-0387 (75327.63) or credit any overpayment thereto. However, please do not include the payment of issue fees.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric J. Groen, Reg. No. 32,230
BAKER & DANIELS
205 West Jefferson Boulevard, Suite 250
South Bend, IN 46601
Telephone: (574) 234-4149
Fax: (574)239-1900

I hereby certify that this correspondence
is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as
First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to:
Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450,
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

February 2, 2004

Date



Eric J. Groen, Reg. No. 32,230